



November 7, 2017

The Honorable Kevin Brady
Chairman
Ways and Means Committee
United States House of Representatives
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Neal
Ranking Member
Ways and Means Committee
United States House of Representatives
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Brady and Ranking Member Neal:

The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) is the largest and oldest general scientific society in the United States, representing over 120,000 scientists and engineers. We are extremely concerned with provisions in the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (H.R. 1) to repeal existing provisions in tax law that reduces the financial burden of higher education for graduate students.

While the goal of the House tax reform plan is to help grow the U.S. economy, the language to repeal the student loan interest deduction and the Lifetime Learning Credit ultimately will have the opposite effect by making advanced education less affordable and driving students away from key areas of study in science, technology, engineering, and math.

For over 165 years, AAAS members have reflected the best of scientific and technological ingenuity that helped to make our nation great. Our members are discoverers, inventors, educators, innovators, Nobel Laureates, entrepreneurs, and business leaders. Among our members are scientists and engineers who started their paths by attending U.S. universities and colleges.

According to the Association of College Education (ACE) an estimated 145,000 graduate students received a tuition reduction between 2011-2012 across all fields of study. Repealing the very provision that allows graduate students to continue to study in critical STEM fields means that we will be shutting the door on new opportunities for discovery, exploration and innovation.

Innovation starts with people and ideas, and the United States must nurture our future innovators rather than risk losing them altogether. For this reason, we believe that the current law should stand rather than be repealed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Rush D. Holt'.

Rush D. Holt
Chief Executive Officer